

Time commenced – 13:00pm
Time finished – 14:52pm

**CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE
21 February 2017**

Present: Councillor Bolton (Chair)
Councillors Russell, Whitby

In attendance: Pervez Akhtar – Corporate Parenting Lead
Gill Black – Volunteering Matters
Members of the Children in Care Council
Graeme Ferguson – Virtual School Head
Annamarie Johannesson – Derby Foster Care Association
Andrew Kaiser – Head of Service, Locality 1 & 5
Hazel Lymbery – Director – Specialist Services
Antony Mains – Leaving Care Team Manager
Steven Mason – Democratic Services Officer
Lesley Smales – Designated Nurse for Children in Care
Andy Smith – Strategic Director of People Services

38/16 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Roulstone.

39/16 Late Items to be Introduced by the Chair

There were none.

40/16 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

41/16 Minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

It was noted that the Annual Health Report for Looked after Children April 1st 2015 – March 31st 2016, considered at the November meeting, had identified a resource gap in the Looked after Children Nursing Service. The Chair reported that the Southern Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group were taking a number of steps to explore potential options to address the resource gap identified and that progress would be reported back to the Corporate Parenting Committee. It was noted that this matter was also on the agenda of the Derby Safeguarding Children Board meeting in March 2017.

42/16 Children in Care Council – Update February 2017

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People Services on Children in Care Council – Update February 2017.

Gill Black, Volunteering Matters, and two members of the Children in Care Council (CICC) provided an update on the recent Take Over experience for CICC members. It was reported that a recent visit to Derby County Football Stadium had been a great success and that the members had experienced many opportunities that other young people would not have done. The Chair informed Members that she would write to the Derby County Community Trust Community Engagement team to pass on the thanks of the CICC.

An update was also provided on CICC meetings. It was reported that the Corporate Parenting agenda had been considered by members of the CICC. Members of the CICC asked a number of questions in relation to such subjects as possible CICC involvement in elected Member visits to children's homes, Personal Adviser support for care leavers, unsuitable accommodation, mental health problems for children in care and budgeting advice.

The two members of the CICC left the meeting at this point.

Resolved to note the update.

43/16 Children and Young People Missing from Care

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People Services on Children and Young People Missing from Care. The report was presented by the Head of Service – Locality 1 & 5.

It was reported that a plan to reduce incidences of children and young people going missing had been in place since May 2015 and was updated in June 2016 on the back of the annual report on missing children and young people for 2015-16. The Committee received a presentation on progress over quarter 3 of 2016-17.

Resolved to note progress over quarter 3 relating to children and young people who go missing.

44/16 Elected Member Visits to Children's Homes

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People Services on Elected Member Visits to Children's Homes. The report was presented by the Chair.

It was reported that elected Members carried out periodic visits to children's homes to monitor the quality of care and the welfare of children and young people and that visits fell within Members' corporate parenting responsibilities.

It was also reported that after each visit Members reported on their observations and recommendations and Members were informed of actions taken as a result.

It was noted that the report summarised the inspections and reports of visits done since the last report to the committee on 20 September 2016 and that all planned visits had been completed.

Resolved to note the report.

45/16 Leaving Care Service

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director for People Services on Leaving Care Services. The report was presented by the Leaving Care Manager.

It was reported that overall the progress and development of the service had been good over the past twelve months. It was also reported that the introduction of a new system (LCS) had presented many challenges from a technical perspective but the Council had now overcome these.

It was noted that the quality of Pathway Plans was also improving as evidenced by our recent QA in October 2016. It was also noted that the Council had helped to develop a wider, improved offer for care leavers with regards to education, training and employment and was capturing the voice of care leavers and improving the service as a result and promoting the corporate parenting agenda.

It was reported that performance management meetings had now started to take place on a monthly basis where issues such as numbers in unsuitable accommodation, NEET, those with whom the Council had lost touch, number of home visits, number of Pathway Plans in date were addressed.

Councillor Whitby left the room. Following advice from the Democratic Services Officer, the meeting was deemed not to be quorate and any resolutions could not be agreed, beyond noting the reports.

Resolved to note the content of the report and the progress of the service over the last 18 months.

46/16 Update on the Implementation of Commitments Regarding the Pledge for Children in Care

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People Services on Update on the Implementation of Commitments Regarding the Pledge for Children in Care

It was reported that the Pledge was a promise made by Derby City Council to all children in their care and that it was part of Derby's commitment to give children in its care the best opportunities they could have in life.

It was also reported that departments across the Council gave commitments to implementing the new Pledge at its launch on 26 January 2016.

It was noted that the Corporate Parenting Committee had tasked itself to ensure that the whole Council was fully committed to the Pledge. It was also noted that as part of this overview the Corporate Parenting Committee had scheduled regular updates and progress monitoring of the departments commitments.

It was reported that the Corporate Parenting Committee held a special event on 5 July 2016, in the Council Chamber and directors from all the departments in the council were invited to give a formal update to children in care on the progress made in relation to their Pledges made back in January. It was also reported that a further event was held more recently on 14 December 2016 in the Mayoral reception room, where service directors were again able to provide an update on their Pledges directly to children in care.

Members were provided with an overview of the achievements in relation to the pledges made.

Resolved to note the update report

47/16 Corporate Parenting Strategy 2015 - 2018

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People Services on Corporate Parenting Strategy 2015 – 2018.

It was reported that the Corporate Parenting Strategy outlined the Council's aspirations for how it would continue to develop services and meet the needs of the children and young people in its care. It was also reported that the strategy was for three years and aimed to deliver the best outcomes for children and young people in care in Derby.

It was noted that the strategy had been developed by the Council and its partners and was underpinned by: the Derby Plan 2013-15, The Council Plan 2015 – 2018 and also supported the Children and Young People's Commissioning Service Plan 2015 – 2016.

It was also noted that as well as providing the context for and profile of children in care in Derby the Corporate Parenting Strategy focussed on 6 key areas:

1. Voice of the Child
2. Good and safe placements
3. Relationships
4. Transition into adulthood - Leaving Care
5. Education
6. Health

It was reported that the strategy had linked the key areas with the Pledge for children in care.

Members received an update on what had been done so far in each key area and what was planned for the future.

Resolved to note the report.

48/16 Corporate Parenting Policy

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People Services on Corporate Parenting Policy.

It was reported that as part of the improvement plan for corporate parenting it was identified that councillors and staff could benefit from a better understanding of corporate parenting, what corporate parenting was, their responsibilities and how they could support the improvement in services to children in care and care leavers. Members noted that this was outlined in the new corporate parenting policy.

It was reported that 'Corporate Parenting' was the term used to describe the responsibility of local authorities, as corporate bodies, to provide the best possible services and support to Looked after Children and Young People in their care.

It was noted that the role of the corporate parent was to seek, for the children they look after, the outcomes that every good parent would want for their own child. It was also noted that while the core statutory responsibility in respect of looked after children was a Children and Young Peoples Services function of the authority, all Members and officers of the local authority shared the responsibilities of the corporate parent.

Resolved to note the report.

49/16 Annual Performance Summary of Derby's Looked After Children

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People Services on Annual Performance Summary of Derby's Looked After Children.

It was reported that at the end of March 2016, there was a total of 450 looked after children in Derby and that this represented a 4% decline from the position reported at the end of March 2015 and equated to a rate of 76 per 10,000 children (< 18 years of age).

It was also reported that an early statistical release on the total number of children in care, including some outcome related information, was published by the Department for Education (DfE) at the end of December 2016 and highlighted that Derby had fallen below the comparator average of 77 per 10,000.

It was noted that at the end of March 2016, the largest percentage of Derby's looked after children were:

- Male (60%)
- Aged 10-15 years (36%)
- White British (78%)
- Placed in a foster care placed (68%)
- Placed outside of Derby City (59%).

Members were updated on how Derby compared nationally in relation to the profile of the Council's looked after children, alongside a summary of whether health needs were being met and outcomes for its care leavers. In addition to this, Members were updated on recent trends pertaining to the Council's looked after children, highlighting any areas for further consideration.

Annamarie Johannesson, Derby Foster Care Association, wished to thank the Chair for the Christmas cards that she sent to every foster carer and also for arranging a coffee morning and a Christmas tea event.

Resolved to note the report.

MINUTES END